

## GMP Dashboard

Table M-1	SEP 2023	OCT 2023	2023-24 YTD	Var. from Last YTD
<b>Western Canadian GHTS Performance (Days)</b>				
Total Time in System	43.0	38.6	41.3	4.0%
Average Days In Store – Country	25.6	22.9	24.0	0.4%
Loaded Transit Time	5.7	5.7	5.7	8.9%
Average Days In Store – Terminal	11.7	10.0	11.6	9.4%
<b>Total Traffic ('000 tonnes)</b>				
Primary Elevator Shipments	4,262.4	4,482.3	11,963.0	-6.4%
Railway Shipments (all Western Canada traffic)	5,034.2	5,534.3	13,885.2	-2.5%
Western Port Terminal Shipments	2,945.1	4,005.6	9,078.4	0.7%
<b>Railway Performance</b>				
Avg. Loads on Wheels (Cars)	8,627	10,180	8,177	0.9%
Total Western Port Car Cycle (days)	14.2	12.6	14.2	1.5%
<b>Port Performance</b>				
Western Port Unloads (Number of Cars)	34,250	39,301	97,617	-2.6%
Vessel Time in Port (days)	10.2	12.1	9.8	36.1%

*Periodic revisions and corrections to the data received by the Monitor may result in the restatement of previously calculated measurement values. Where such differences arise, the values presented here should be considered to supersede those found in previous reports.*

## Overview

Western Canadian railway grain shipments increased by 9.5% in October 2023, to almost 4.6 MMT from 4.2 MMT in September. However, this marked a softer start to the 2023-24 crop year, with total YTD tonnage falling by 2.5%, to 13.9 MMT from 14.2 MMT a year earlier. Port shipments for October totaled 4.0 MMT, a 36.0% increase from September volumes, but an 8.7% decrease from those in October 2022. The crop-year-to-date growth in shipments registered 0.7% at the end of the first quarter. A month-over-month increase was seen in the average amount of time vessels spent in port, which grew to 12.1 days in October from 10.2 in September. The overall first-quarter-average vessel time in port measures 9.8 days.

## Highlights for October 2023 and First Quarter 2023-24 CY

### Traffic and Movement (page 2)

- Primary-elevator shipments were 12.0 MMT in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year, 6.4% less than in the previous year.
- Total Western Canadian rail shipments to all destinations (from all primary/process elevators and producer-car sites) in the first three months of the 2023-24 crop year totaled 13.9 MMT, down 2.5% from the previous crop year.
- Bulk shipments from Western ports totaled 9.1 MMT in the first quarter of the crop year, up 0.7% from last crop year.

### System Efficiency and Performance (page 4)

- Average weekly primary-elevator stocks decreased 3.9% from the same period last year, while average days-in-store grew 0.4%.
- Average weekly port-terminal stocks increased 15.5% from the same period last year, while average days-in-store grew 9.4%.
- The preliminary average car cycle for hopper-car movements to Western Canadian ports decreased by 11.3% in October, to 12.6 days from 14.2 days in September. Still, the YTD average rose by a marginal 1.5%, to 14.2 days from the 14.0 days posted a year earlier. In comparison, the car cycles tied to movements into Eastern Canada decreased sharply, with the YTD average falling by 13.6% to 24.3 days, while those into the US posted a 14.3% increase, rising to an average of 27.3 days.
- The average vessel time in port during the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year was 9.8 days, a 36.1% increase from that observed the previous crop year.
- Port-terminal out-of-car time fell to 16.7% at Vancouver in October from 29.4% in September and to 2.8% at Thunder Bay from 4.6% the previous month. Prince Rupert did not report out-of-car time in October.

### Commercial Relations (page 6)

- Average primary-elevation charges held constant in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year.
- Both CN and CPKC raised their single-car freight rates sharply in the first quarter. Consecutive monthly increases effectively raised CN's rates by a factor of 40% at the close of the period. Although CPKC delayed advancing any increase until September 2023, it ultimately followed CN's lead, effectively raising its rates by slightly under 30% at the close of October 2023.
- Average terminal-elevation charges held constant in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year.

### Infrastructure (page 6)

- At the close of the first quarter the country-elevator network remained unchanged at 405 facilities with almost 9.6 MMT of storage. However, the refitting of three HTP facilities increased the number of loop-track-equipped elevators to 49.
- Railway infrastructure was unchanged at 17,265.7 route-miles.
- The terminal elevator network also remained unchanged, with 17 facilities and almost 2.8 MMT of storage.
- The overall hopper-car fleet rose modestly to a first-quarter average of 22,053 cars, 2.1% more than was the case in the first quarter of the previous crop year.

## Production and Supply

Statistics Canada's August model-based estimate for 2023 field-crop production in Western Canada stands at 61.9 MMT, a 17.3% decline from 2022's 74.8 MMT harvest. This decrease reflects the impact of inadequate rainfall with intermittent coverage across the prairies throughout the 2023 growing season. This estimate represents a 0.4 MMT increase from the model-based estimate recorded at the end of August.

When coupled with July's 5.3 MMT of carry-forward stocks, some 23.7% more than in 2022, the overall grain supply is estimated at 67.3 MMT. This stands 15.0% below the 2022-23 crop year's 79.2-MMT level, marking the return of relatively tight grain supplies available to meet domestic and export demands.

Table M-2	2023*	2022	Var. from Last Yr.
<b>Production &amp; Carry Forward (000's tonnes)</b>			
* Western Canada Total Production - Preliminary	61,924.0	74,839.5	-17.3%
Western Canada On-Farm & Primary Elevator Carry Forward Stock	5,334.4	4,311.8	23.7%
<b>Total Grain Supply</b>	<b>67,258.4</b>	<b>79,151.3</b>	<b>-15.0%</b>

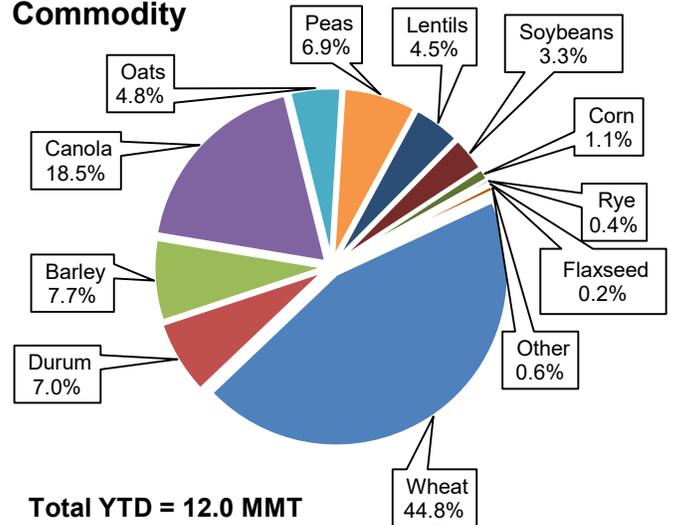
## Traffic and Movement

As the first quarter wrapped up, October deliveries fell to average just over 0.95 MMT per week. Weekly primary-elevator stocks also fell from the previous month to average 3.8 MMT, with good space available in elevator facilities across the prairies.

Table M-3	OCT 2023	2023-24 YTD	Var. from Last YTD
<b>Primary Elevator Shipments (000's tonnes)</b>			
Manitoba	856.6	2,611.7	16.8%
Saskatchewan	2,159.8	5,777.6	-11.4%
Alberta	1,442.2	3,496.6	-11.0%
British Columbia	23.7	77.1	-14.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,482.3</b>	<b>11,963.0</b>	<b>-6.4%</b>
<b>Western Canada Railway Traffic (000's tonnes)</b>			
Shipments to Western Ports	4,564.7	11,195.2	-3.3%
Shipments to Eastern Canada	178.5	439.0	-26.1%
Shipments to US & Mexico	706.4	2,008.0	7.3%
Shipments Western Domestic	84.8	243.0	20.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,534.3</b>	<b>13,885.2</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>
<b>Western Port Unloads (Number of Cars)</b>			
Vancouver	29,073	69,450	-0.5%
Prince Rupert	2,598	3,961	-57.4%
Churchill	0	0	n/a
Thunder Bay	7,630	24,206	14.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,301</b>	<b>97,617</b>	<b>-2.6%</b>

Table M-3	OCT 2023	2023-24 YTD	Var. from Last YTD
<b>Terminal Elevator Shipments (000's tonnes)</b>			
Vancouver	3,225.5	6,761.3	8.1%
Prince Rupert	247.5	385.6	-53.2%
Churchill	0.0	0.0	n/a
Thunder Bay	532.6	1,931.5	-0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,005.6</b>	<b>9,078.4</b>	<b>0.7%</b>

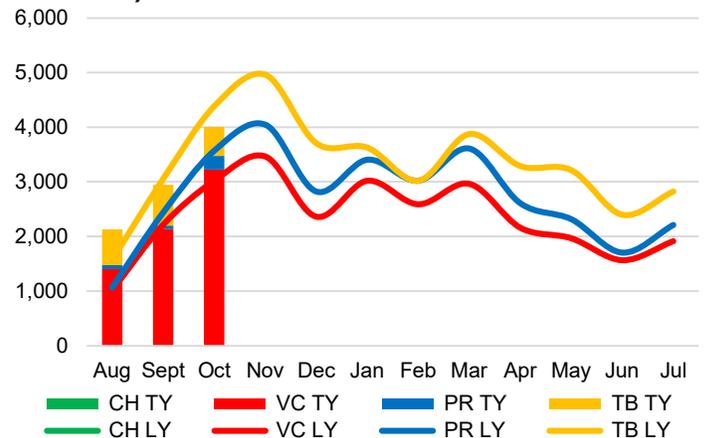
## Primary Elevator Shipments by Commodity



GMP Data Table 2A-1

Crop-year to date grain shipments from primary elevators fell, registering 6.4% less than in the previous year. Wheat, including durum, and canola continue to constitute the largest proportion of the movement at 70.3%. Movement of peas and lentils contributed 11.4% of the balance.

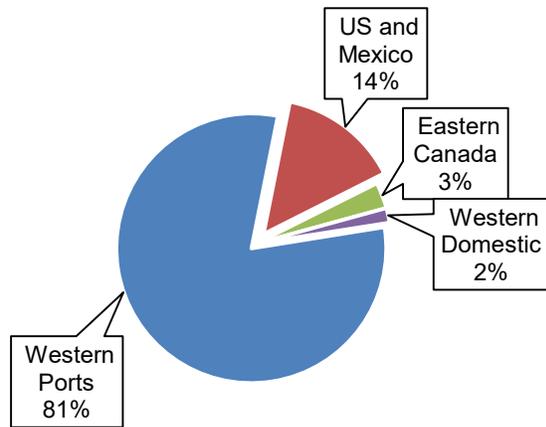
## Terminal Elevator Shipments (000's tonnes)



GMP Data Table 2C-1

Bulk shipments from western ports grew in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year, registering a 0.7% increase on a year-over-year basis. While Vancouver shipments registered an 8.1%, those at Prince Rupert fell by 53.2%. Thunder Bay saw a 0.2% decline from the first quarter last year.

## Western Canadian Grain Destinations

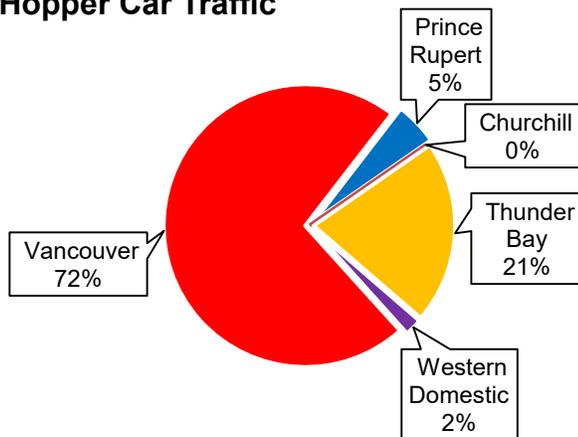


Total YTD = 13.9 MMT

GMP Data Tables 2B-1, 2B-8 & 2B-15

Railway grain shipments from Western Canada totaled just under 13.9 MMT in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year, 2.5% less than the 14.2 MMT handled a year earlier. The majority, about 11.2 MMT, or 81%, was directed to Western Canadian ports in support of offshore sales; 3.3% less than what had been handled a year earlier. Movements into Eastern Canada fell by a more substantive 26.1% while shipments to the US and Mexico, as well as Western Domestic destinations, rose by 7.3% and 20.2% respectively.

## Western Canadian Destined Hopper Car Traffic



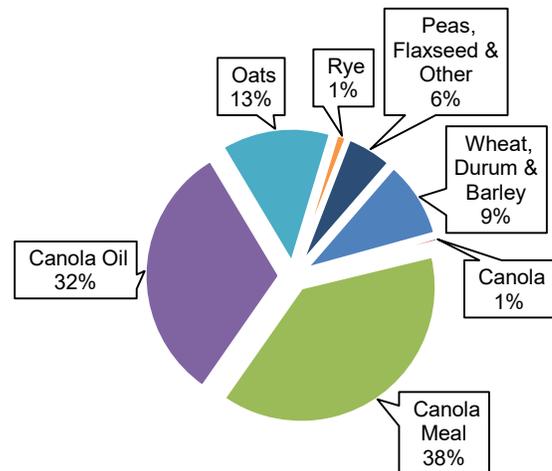
Total YTD - 11.2 MMT

GMP Data Tables 2B-3 to 2B-7

Over 95% of the tonnage directed to destinations within Western Canada moves in covered hopper cars. During the first three months of the 2023-24 crop year this amounted to about 11.2 MMT, down 2.7% from the 11.5 MMT handled a year earlier. Seventy-two percent of these hopper cars were destined to Vancouver, which remains the port of choice for exporting grain, given its ready access to Asia-Pacific markets and the

concentration of export terminal facilities. A 47.8% decrease in hopper-car shipments to Prince Rupert was largely responsible for shaping the broader traffic decline. This was largely contained by modest increases in shipments to Vancouver and Thunder Bay, which rose by 1.4% and 1.6% respectively. Western Domestic destinations saw a much greater gain of 21.0%.

## US Destined Grain by Commodity

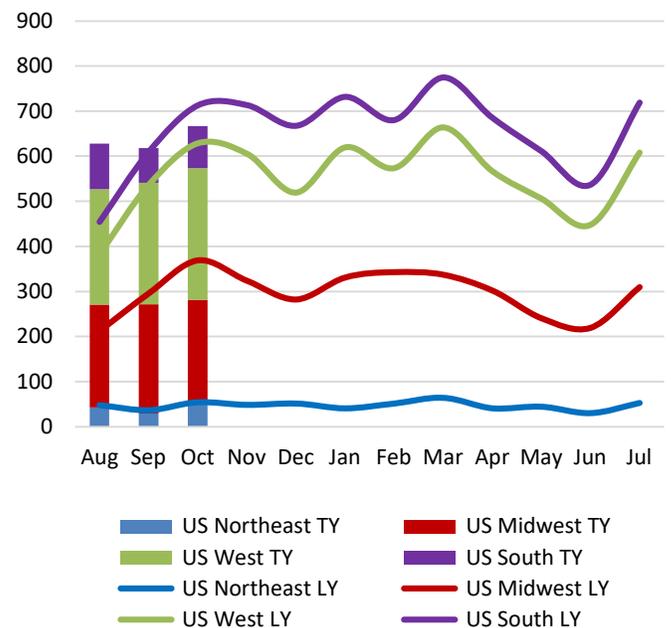


Total YTD - 1.9 MMT

GMP Data Table 2B-18

Total railway shipments into the US reached just over 1.9 MMT in the first three months of the 2022-23 crop year, up 7.6% from the nearly 1.8 MMT handled a year earlier. Just over 79% of these shipments were directed into the Midwestern and Western US, with canola and canola products dominating.

## US Destined Grain by Destination Territory (000's tonnes)



GMP Data Table 2B-18

## System Efficiency and Performance

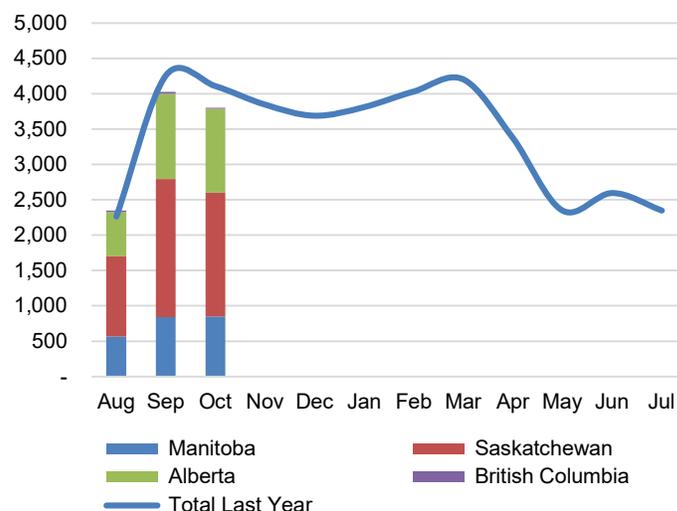
As the harvest wrapped up, primary-elevator stocks eased to average 3.8 MMT in October, down from 4.0 MMT in September. The overall average for the crop year is 3.3 MMT. Country space was good throughout the period. Country stocks utilized 69% of the working capacity of the network in October. Stocks ranged from 58% and 64% in British Columbia and Saskatchewan respectively to 73% in Alberta and 78% in Manitoba.

The average days-in-store in the primary-elevator system for the first quarter increased from last year, growing 0.4% to 24.0 days.

Table M-4	OCT 2023	2023-24 YTD	Var. from Last YTD
<b>Primary Elevator</b>			
Average Weekly Stocks (000's tonnes)	3,801.0	3,310.9	-3.9%
Average Days in Store	22.9	24.0	0.4%
<b>Railway Operations (days)</b>			
Cycle Time to Western Ports	12.6	14.2	1.5%
Cycle Time to Eastern Canada	23.6	24.3	-13.6%
Cycle Time to US	23.0	27.3	14.3%
Loaded Transit to Western Ports	5.7	5.7	8.9%
Loaded Transit to Eastern Canada	13.1	12.2	-6.5%
Loaded Transit to US	8.8	10.9	17.3%
Rail Fleet in Grain Service	20,275	17,806	9.5%
<b>Western Canada Terminal Elevator</b>			
Average Weekly Stocks (000's tonnes)	1,427.1	1,151.9	15.5%
Average Days in Store	10.0	11.6	9.4%
Port Unloads (hopper cars)	39,301	97,617	-2.6%
Terminal Out-of-Car Time	13.5%	15.1%	32.5%
<b>Western Canada Port Operations</b>			
Average Vessel Time in Port (days)	12.1	9.8	36.1%
<i>Car order and order fulfillment data is not complete from both railways and will not be reported until further notice.</i>			



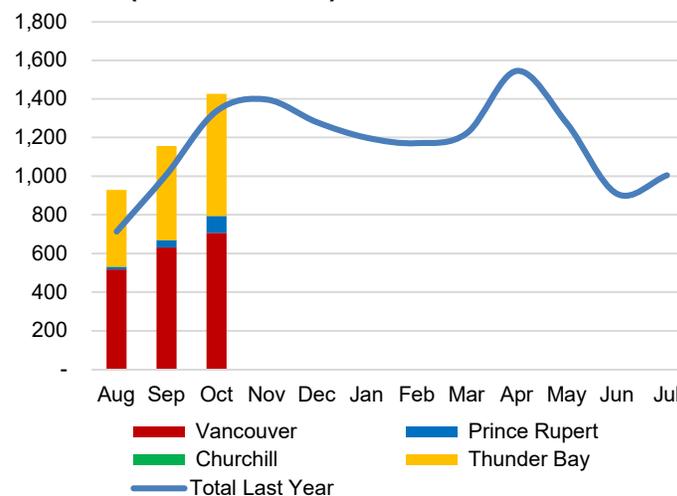
## Average Weekly Primary Elevator Stocks (000's tonnes)



GMP Data Table 5A-2

Primary elevator stocks ended the last crop year averaging 2.35 MMT in-store. They held constant at 2.35 MMT in August and grew rapidly to 4.0 MMT in September with new-crop deliveries, before easing to 3.8 MMT in October. Wheat, including durum, and canola, comprise 61% of the total stock. At 22% of the stock, barley, oats and peas made up over half of the balance.

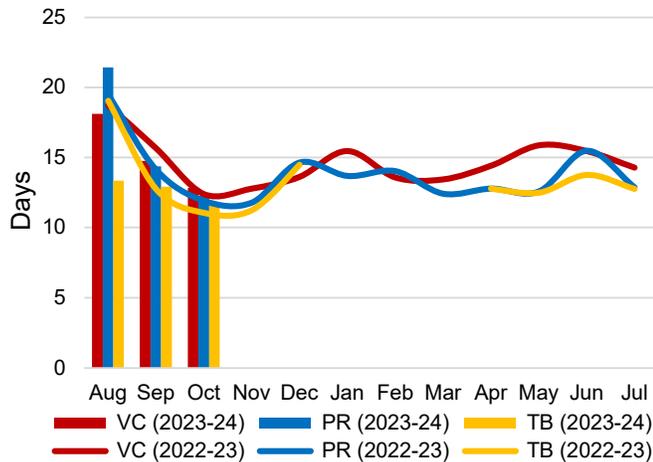
## Average Weekly Terminal Elevator Stocks (000's tonnes)



GMP Data Table 5C-2

Overall terminal-elevator stocks averaged 1.4 MMT in October, up from the 1.15 MMT in-store during September. Stocks grew at the three operating ports in Western Canada. Wheat, including durum, and canola, comprise nearly 76% of the total stock. In October, western ports utilized just 74% of their overall working capacity.

## Railway Cycle Times to Western Ports (days)

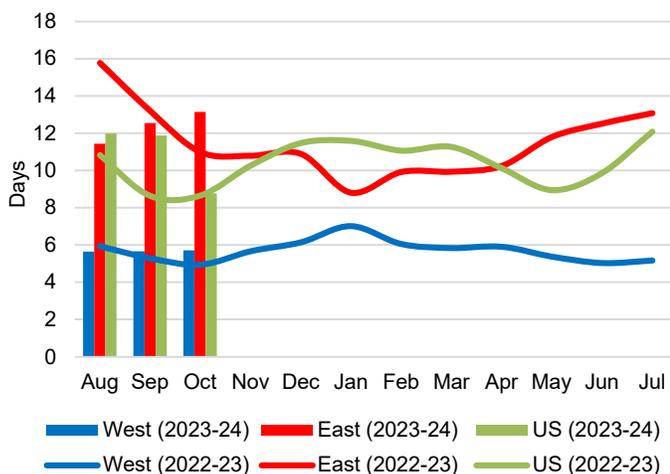


GMP Data Table 5B-1

The railway car cycle to Western Canadian ports averaged 14.2 days in the first three months of the 2023-24 crop year, up 1.5% from the 14.0-day average posted in the previous crop year. This result largely reflected increases in the Vancouver and Prince Rupert corridors, which rose by 1.7% and 6.2% respectively. The average in the Thunder Bay corridor fell by a marginal 0.4%.

The average car cycle on movements into Eastern Canada declined by a more substantive 13.6%, to 24.3 days from 28.1 days a year earlier. Conversely, the car cycle on movements into the United States rose by 14.3%, to an average of 27.3 days from 23.9 days the previous crop year.

## Average Loaded Transit Times (days)

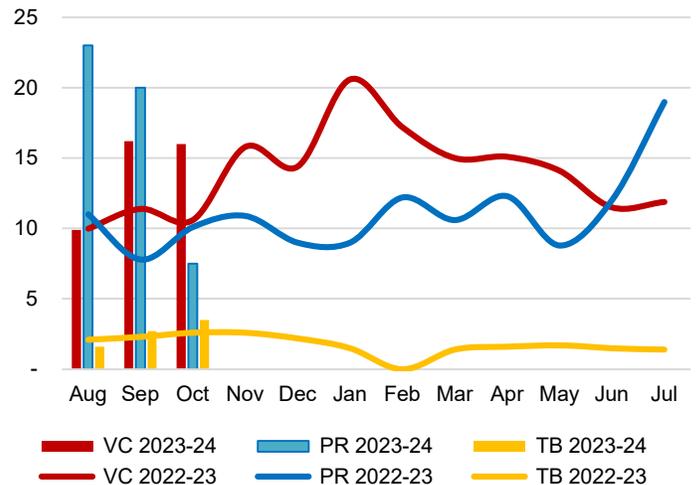


GMP Data Tables 5B-4, 5B-8, 5B-12

The loaded transit time for traffic destined to Western Canadian ports averaged 5.7 days in the first three months of the 2023-24 crop year, up 8.9% from the 5.2-day average posted a year earlier. This was the product of increases in all three primary corridors, with the Vancouver average rising by 8.8%, Prince Rupert's by 9.1%, and Thunder Bay's by 7.4%. A 6.5% decrease

was observed on movements into Eastern Canada, with the average loaded transit time falling to 12.2 days from 13.1 days twelve months earlier. The average on movements into the United States increased by 17.3%, to 10.9 days from 9.3 days.

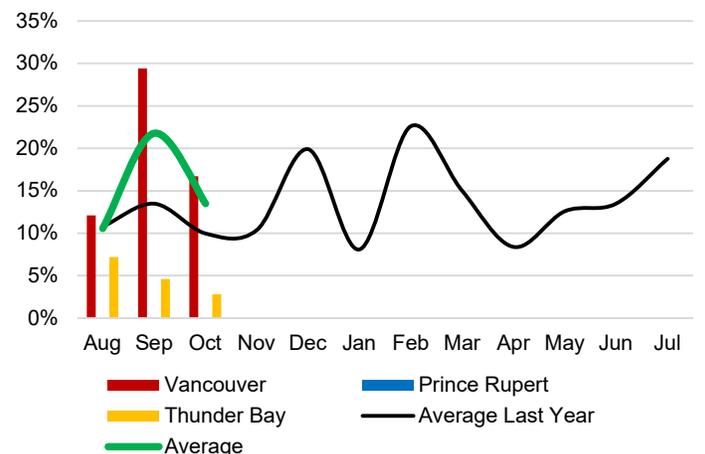
## Average Days in Port per Vessel



GMP Data Table 5D-1

In October, the overall average time vessels were in port waiting and loading grain grew to 12.1 days from 10.2 days the month before. The first-quarter average stands at 9.8 days, 36.1% higher than that registered in the first quarter of the previous crop year. While Vancouver and Prince Rupert experienced month-over-month declines, Thunder Bay saw the average climb from September levels. For October, days in port stood at 16.0 for Vancouver, 7.5 for Prince Rupert and 3.5 for Thunder Bay.

## Port Terminal Out-of-Car Time (% of total operating hours)



GMP Data Table 5C-5

The port terminal out-of-car time measure represents the total number of hours terminal elevator facilities are open and staffed (including overtime hours) and the corresponding number of hours that terminals have no rail cars available to unload. The measure is expressed as a percentage (hours without cars to the total number of hours working).

The aggregate measure for all ports contracted to 13.5% in October, with a first quarter of the crop-year average of 15.1%. Terminal out-of-car time at Vancouver fell to 16.7% in October and to 2.8% at Thunder Bay. Prince Rupert has not reported for the month of October.

## Commercial Relations

<i>Table M-5</i> Rates: \$CDN per tonne	Q1 2023-24	Index (1999=100)	% Change YTD
<b>Avg. Primary Elevation</b>	16.56	138.0	0.0%
<b>Rail to Vancouver</b>			
CN	79.71	217.1	41.7%
CPKC	80.55	218.9	28.1%
<b>Rail to Pr. Rupert</b>			
CN	79.71	191.8	44.6%
<b>Rail to Thunder Bay</b>			
CN	68.04	210.5	37.8%
CPKC	61.49	204.4	29.1%
<b>Average Terminal Elevation</b>	15.64	171.5	0.0%

*Note: Commercial rates are measured on a quarterly basis, the above table refers to rates at the close of the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year (as at 31 October 2023). Railway freight rates reflect average published single-car rates, and do not include multi-car incentives (\$8/tonne for 100+ car blocks).*

Both CN and CPKC increased their single-car freight rates substantially in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year. At the outset of August 2023, CN escalated its rates by about 25.0%. Additional increases averaging about 5.0% followed in September, as did more selective increases of between 5.0% and 8.0% in October. The compound effect of these pricing actions was to escalate the rates on movements to Vancouver by 41.7%; Prince Rupert, by 44.6%; Thunder Bay by 37.8%. In comparison, CPKC left its year-end rates unchanged until September, when it applied an average increase of 17.5% on movements into Vancouver, and 19.7% on movements into Thunder Bay. This was followed in October with additional increases that averaged 9.0% and 7.8% respectively. The net effect was a 28.1% increase in CPKC's Vancouver rates, and a 29.1% increase in its Thunder Bay rates.

## Commercial Developments

**Bunge-Viterra merger prompts additional review:** From the outset of its June announcement, it was known that the global reach of the proposed merger between Bunge and Viterra would require the regulatory approval of numerous countries. Shortly afterwards, the Competition Bureau affirmed that it would be undertaking an appropriate assessment of the proposed transaction in Canada. However, on 26 September 2023 the federal transport minister stated that the department would be launching its own review under the merger and acquisition provisions of the Canada Transportation Act. Noting that both companies had ownership interests in port terminals throughout Canada, and that the transaction was important to the smooth functioning of the transportation sector and the broader supply chain, this review was to focus on the public interest. The

Transport Canada review, which will include consultations with various stakeholders, must be completed by 2 June 2024.

**Unifor strike disrupts Seaway operations:** Unionized employees of the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. (SLSMC), represented by Unifor, issued a 72-hour strike notice on 18 October 2023. This set the stage for a work stoppage that began on 22 October, suspending marine traffic movement through the seaway and much of the Great Lakes region. The strike came at the height of the shipping season for several commodities, including the eastbound movement of Western Canadian grain. The main point of contention appeared to be salaries, with Unifor's leadership finding the offers advanced by the SLSMC to be insufficient. Although negotiations continued, the perceived harm to the Ontario and Quebec economies brought mounting pressure for a quick resolution to the dispute. Much of the concern centered on a possible reincarnation of the July labour dispute in British Columbia, which hindered supply chain operations across the country for weeks. Accordingly, a variety of stakeholders urged the federal government to intervene. Ultimately, the strike lasted but a week, with the parties reaching a tentative agreement that saw Unifor's 360 striking lock workers return to their jobs on 30 October.

**Transport Canada to review rail policies:** Transport Canada has initiated a review of existing freight rail policies. The review is being conducted to further examine rail-related issues raised by the Supply Chain Task Force, in order to inform any future possible legislative and regulatory updates. Several of these issues may be of interest to the Western Canadian grain sector, include final-offer arbitration, grain and winter-contingency plans, extended interswitching, and the Maximum Revenue Entitlement. The review will also consider the broader efficiency needs of the rail sector, including the role and powers of the Canadian Transportation Agency as well as the needs of the shortline industry. Targeted consultations with various rail freight stakeholders began in October and have extended through November 2023. Stakeholders who wish to receive a copy of the discussion paper and then provide their views on relevant freight rail policies before November 30, are encouraged to reach out to Transport Canada at [tc.freighttrail-fretferroviaire.tc@tc.gc.ca](mailto:tc.freighttrail-fretferroviaire.tc@tc.gc.ca).

**Prince Rupert expansion begins:** On 19 October 2023 the Prince Rupert Port Authority announced that it was commencing construction on the \$750-million Ridley Island Export Logistics Project to enhance rail-to-container transloading at the port. Ray-Mont Logistics will operate the facilities, which will handle various export products including grains and special crops and aims to improve supply chain resiliency and sustainability. It is intended to provide new capacities for Canadian exporters, strengthen container supply chains, and be supported by local Indigenous partners.

## Infrastructure

Apart from the railways' car fleet, GMP measures relating to infrastructure are reported on a quarterly basis. The 2023-24 crop year has thus far produced several modest, although noteworthy, changes in the GHTS's physical infrastructure.

The total number of network facilities remained unchanged at 405, with storage capacity reaching nearly 9.6 MMT. However, the number of loop-track facilities increased, to 49 from the 46 recorded at the end of the previous crop-year, following the retrofitting of three existing high-throughput ladder-track facilities.

There were no changes recorded against the railway network in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year. Total mileage remained unaltered at 17,265.7 route-miles, with 84.5% of this being operated by CN and CPKC.

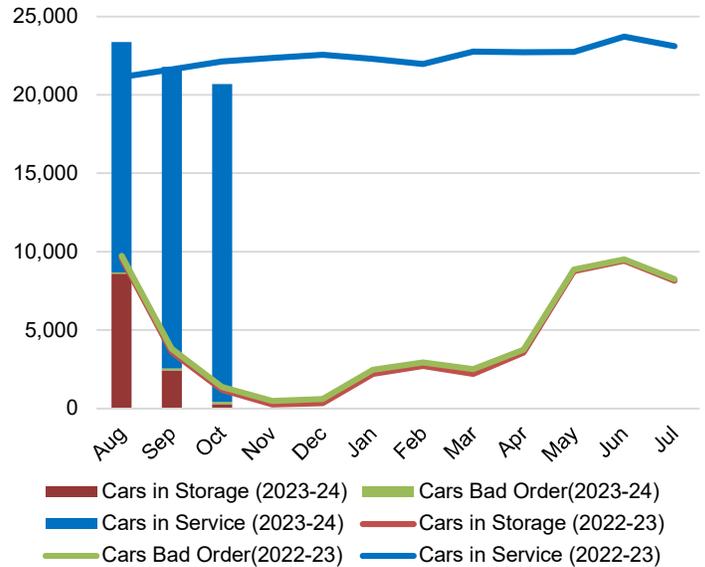
Neither were there any changes to the terminal elevator network in the first three months of the 2023-24 crop year. The network comprises 17 facilities with 2.8 MMT of storage capacity.

Table M-6	Q1 2023-24	Index (1999=100)	% Change YTD
<b>Country Elevator</b>			
Primary and Process Elevators (Count)	405	40.3	0.0%
Storage Capacity (000's tonnes)	9,563.5	136.1	0.0%
<b>Railway</b>			
Route Miles - Major Carriers	14,596.1	98.4	0.0%
Route Miles - Shortline Carriers	2,669.6	57.5	0.0%
Route Miles - Total	17,265.7	88.7	0.0%
Average Weekly Total Hopper Car Fleet Size*	22,053	n/a	2.1%
<b>Terminal Elevator</b>			
Terminal Facilities (Count)	17	121.4	0.0%
Storage Capacity (000's tonnes)	2,752.5	107.6	0.0%

\* Hopper Car Fleet Size represents all cars in all statuses for the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year.

During times of heavy demand, nearly the entire hopper-car fleet is placed into service. It is normal practice for railways to move cars into storage as traffic volumes decrease in the latter months of the crop year. This was the case in the 2022-23 crop year as the weekly number of cars in service declined to average just 14,860 in July 2023, with about 35% of the fleet then having been placed in storage. A further decline in the serviceable-car count is seen in August 2023, falling to 14,687 before advancing to 20,275 in October. In October, 98% of the overall fleet was in service to address the shipping demands for western grain, with a small number of cars being reported in either storage or bad order status.

## Railway Grain Fleet Size and Utilization



GMP Data Table 3B-2

## Producer Cars

No change was registered in the number of producer-car loading sites in the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year. The total number of available producer-car loading locations at the end of October stands at 272.

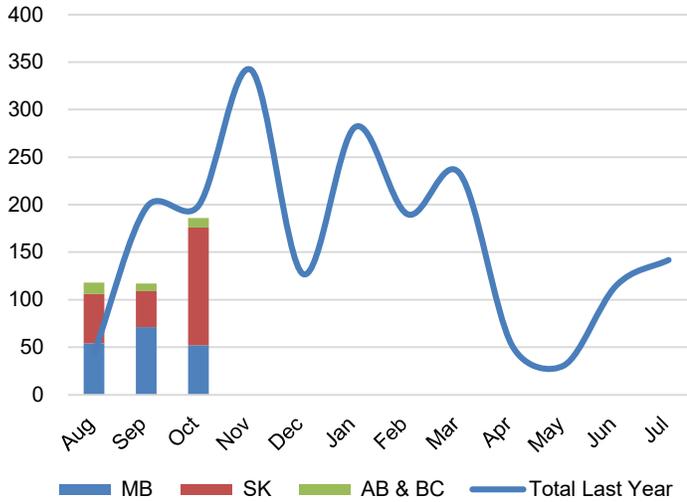
Table M-7 Producer Car Loading Sites	Q1 2023-24	Index (1999=100)	% Change YTD
Class 1 Carriers	142	22.2	0.0%
Shortline Carriers	130	200.0	0.0%
<b>All Carriers</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

Table M-8 Producer Cars Scheduled	Q1 2023-24	2023-24 YTD	Var. from Last YTD
Manitoba	177	177	-3.8%
Saskatchewan	124	124	-0.5%
Alberta & B.C.	30	30	-26.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>-4.3%</b>

Producer cars scheduled for October 2023 were 6.5% less than in October 2022. Consistent with the month-over-month decrease, the overall crop year saw a decline of 4.3% from the previous year. The previous crop year saw oats shipments comprising only 43% of total producer cars scheduled, while the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year registered oats rebounding to 53% of the aggregate producer-car number. Once again, the United States is the largest destination for producer cars, accounting for 72% of the total, including all of the oats and durum shipments.



## Producer Cars Scheduled by Province

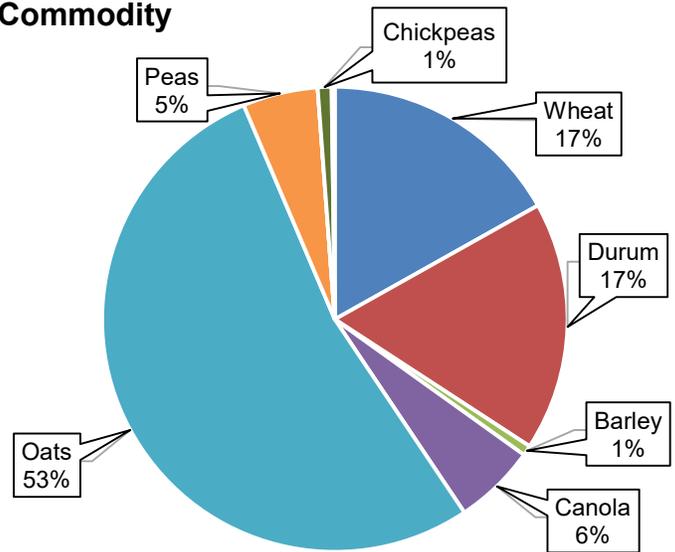


GMP Data Table 6B-2

Recent years has seen the proportion of producer-car shipments devoted to oats grow while a decrease has been registered in the number of cars carrying other cereal grains. Shipments through the first quarter of the 2023-24 crop year saw this trend continuing, with oats comprising 53% of the total, while wheat, durum and

barley combined comprise 35%. Canola contributed 6%, while combined peas and chickpeas rounded out the final 6% of the total volume.

## Producer Cars Scheduled by Commodity



GMP Data Table 6B-2



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This report provides a summary of the data developed under the Grain Monitoring Program. Detailed monthly Data Tables can be found in Excel format on Quorum's website at: [www.grainmonitor.ca](http://www.grainmonitor.ca)

Quorum welcomes questions and comments on the reports and data. Please contact us at our address by either phone or email.